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ABSTRACT

The Wright School (Durham, North Carolina) is a 24 student, short term residential ReEd program for emotionally disturbed children. A study of the Wright School Admission and Discharge Planning Conferences was undertaken to determine the level of conference participation by people in various roles and the nature of the topics being discussed during the conference. Every 30 seconds the observers recorded the topic being discussed and the role of the person speaking. Conference participants--who usually included day and night teacher counselors, the liasion teacher counselor, a parent, a child, a psychiatric/psychological consultant, and at least one person from the child's home school or mental health clinic--were also asked to complete a conference satisfaction questionnaire. Among findings were that mean length of conferences was 53 minutes; the topic receiving the greatest attention was school behavior, followed by home behavior; parents, as a group, are the most active participants; and participants rated the conferences very highly. Tables with statistical data are included as well as implications of findings, a copy of the questionnaire, and a sample observation form. (SW)

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Facilitating Multi-Disciplinary Conferences: Requisite Skills

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Wright School is a twenty-four student short-term residential ReEd program for emotionally disturbed children. The program's philosophy is based on ecological principles that require the involvement of parents, agencies, schools, neighbors, and other significant individuals in the development and implememtation of individual education/treatment plans. These goal-directed, educationally-based plans are designed to teach new academic, social, and behavioral skills to children, as well as to identify eco-system needs and potential resources.

It is an intent of the program to avoid the unnecessary and undesirable apsects of institutionalization. As one means of doing this, Wright School students return home each weekend, make regular public school visits, and are usually enrolled for four-to six-month terms. While at Wright School much effort is made to maintain or initiate involvement of local agencies so that the child's treatment continues when he or she returns to the community. For this reason the education/treatment plans are developed collaboratively with representatives of all identified ecological components within the child's social system. This planning begins within the child's community prior to enrollment and is facilitated by a liaison teacher counselor. The role of the liaison teacher counselor includes building relationships within the eco-system and helping the child and others to identify goals and strategies - that is to insure the appropriate sense of "community ownership" of the education/treatment plan.

The use of broadly-based ecological planning conferences as a mechanism for developing education/treatment plans has been used at Wright School for many years. Typically, a pre-enrollment conference is held within the child's community to set long-range goals, identify strengths and suggested strategies, and to identify "system needs," such as parent counseling or parent education, nutritional needs, financial needs, medical needs, etc. A typical pre-enrollment

conference will include the child, parents, a mental health center parent worker, public school teachers, extended family members, volunteers, etc. After the child has attended Wright School for one month, an Admissions Planning Conference is held to formalize the specific objectives of the education/treatment plan. While at Wright School, parents are asked to sign this document which is much like an IEP. About a month prior to discharge, a Discharge Planning Conference is held to assess programs and to establish an adequate discharge plan. Both the Admission and Discharge Planning Conferences include the community representatives, parents, Wright School teacher counselors, consultants, student teachers and usually the child. Because of a strong philosophical bias, as well as requirements of P.L. 94-142, effort is made to include as many potentially significant individuals as possible in all of the conferences and to rely on the group to make many education/treatment decisions.

The liaison teacher counselor functions as "case manager" during a child's Wright School experience and is most visible in this role during planning conferences. The liaison teacher counselor organizes and prepares for the conference and is usually the only person who is aware of the various spoken and sometimes unspoken agenda for the meeting. The liaison teacher acts as group facilitator to insure these agenda topics are identified, discussed, and pushed toward resolution.

The structure and schedule of the Admissions Planning Conference and Discharge Planning Conference has proven extremely useful in the development of collaborative plans, however, staff have also reported some frustrations with the conferences. These problems have been similar to those reported by Bennett (1982). For example, problems have been encountered with professional turfism, with overlap in professional responsibilities and with disciplinary differences in philosophical orientation and outlook. At times, there has been "too many cooks" confounding the issue and at times there has been a risk of

diffuseness of responsibility for seeing that treatment is appropriately provided. Occasionally, professionals have felt their skills were not adequately understood or utilized and often the liaison teacher counselors have felt frustrated by not being able to accomplish all that they had hoped during the conferences. While rarely did these frustrations erupt into overt problems, the staff has been aware of their existence and concerned about what should be done.

Consequently a study of the Wright School Admission and Discharge Planning Conferences was undertaken. The primary purpose of this study was to determine the level of conference participation by people in various professional roles and the nature of the topics being discussed during the conference. A secondary purpose of the study was to ascertain each participant's satisfaction with the conference. It was hoped that an analysis of these data would provide helpful information for determining problem areas as well as positive aspects of the conferences.

Method

The observation scale and the satisfaction questionnaires used by Goldstein, Strickland, Turnbull, and Curry (1980) were modified for use in the Wright School setting. By using videotapes of previous conferences four observers were trained in the use of the observation scale. Inter-rater reliabilities ranging from .88 to .97 were obtained among the observers prior to beginning the study. From the middle of June to early August, 1981, nine Admission and Discharge Planning Conferences were observed. Because these conferences were held during the summer months when many public school personnel typically are not working, additional observations were scheduled later in the fall. During November, 1981, seven more conferences were observed which resulted in a total sample of 16 conferences. Of these 16 conferences, ten were Admission Planning Conferences and six were Discharge Planning Conferences.

Prior to all of the conferences, the study was explained to parents and their written consent to participate was obtained. No parent refused to participate, but

on three occasions the liaison teacher counselor did not want the conference observed because of sensitive information that was to be discussed.

Procedures

Every 30 seconds the observers recorded the topic being discussed and the role of the person speaking (hereafter called a speaking citation), and at the end of each conference participants were asked to complete a Conference Satisfaction Questionnaire. Three different forms were used. The consultants and liaison teacher counselors completed a 4-item, Likert scale questionnaire, the children completed a 4-item, nominal questionnaire and the other participant filled out a 9-item Likert scale questionnaire. Additionally, at the end of the conference observers recorded their subjective impressions and descriptive notes of events that took place. The first four conferences were taped but because of staff and observers' objections to the taping, it was discontinued.

Results

Participants. Table 1 presents the length and number of persons attending the conferences. The number of persons in attendance ranged from 7 to 14 with a mean of 9.1. The persons attending almost all of the conferences were the day and night teacher counselors, the liaison teacher counselor, a parent, a child, a psychiatric or psychological consultant and at least one person from the child's home school or mental health clinic. Persons attending the conferences with less regularity were medical students doing rotation in child psychiatry, students completing a practicum in special education and other staff at Wright School such as the educational diagnostician, teacher-counselor supervisors, and resource teachers.

Eight of the children being discussed at the conference came from two-parent families. Both parents were present in 5 of the conferences. In 2 of the conferences a parent brought another family member, thus in 7 of the conferences two adult family members were present. There was a representative from both the child's public school and mental health clinic in only 4 conferences. This may

Table 1

Length and Number of Persons Attending the Conferences

Conference # and Type of Conference	Length of Conference	# of People Present[1]
1 APC	61	14
2 APC	48	12
3 DPC	73	9
4 APC	55	8
5 APC	48	8
6 DPC	48	7
7 APC	64	8
8 APC	57	8
9 APC	50	7
10 APC	58	10
11 DPC	58	11
12 APC	54	7
13 DPC	53	12
14 DPC	52	9
15 DPC	45	8
16 APC	35	7
	$\bar{X} = 53.06$	$\bar{X} = 9.1$

[1] Expressed in Minutes

be somewhat atypical of the conferences since during the summer months representatives from the schools were present at 2 of the 9 conferences while during November representatives from the home schools were present at 5 of the 7 conferences.

Length of the Conferences. The length of time spent in the conferences ranged from 35 minutes to 73 minutes with the mean being 53.06 minutes. No relationship was found between the number of persons present and the length of time spent in the conferences.

Variety and Frequency of Topics Discussed. Table 2 shows the percent of total speaking citations per category. The topic on which the greatest attention was focused was School Behavior, followed by Home Behavior. Noth of the categories included discussion about the child's behavior and how it was being managed. Together these constituted 57% of the total speaking citations.

The third category most frequently coded was the one entitled Other. This category included introductory comments, long pauses and irrelevant discussion such as dealing with the disruptive behavior of a younger brother or sister.

As seen in Table 2, the remaining categories received a fairly small percent of the speaking citations. Since these were planning conferences it is somewhat surprising that so little attention was given to planning future intervention strategies or in planning future goals and contacts. It is also noteworthy that no citations were made during any of the conferences under the category Rights and Responsibilities.

Table 3 shows the nature and number of topics discussed at each conference. Only categories that received more than 10% of the speaking citations are specifically listed. There was a range of 5 to 10 topics discussed during the conferences with the mean being 8.5. In none of the conferences, however, were more than 4 topics discussed in any depth.

Table 2

Percent of Total Speaking Citations per Category

Category	% of Total Speaking Citations
School Behavior	33.90
Home Behavior	23.17
Other	11.73
Personal Feelings	5.87
Affective Goals	5.10
Academics	4.34
Placement	3.81
Personal/Family	2.87
Evaluation	2.40
Health	.82
Future Contacts	.35
Future Goals	.41
Special Services	.35
Individual Responsibilities	.23
Rights and Responsibilities	0

Table 3

Nature and Number of Topics Discussed

Conference #	# of Topics Discussed	Nature of Topics*
1	9	22% Home Behavior 39% School Behavior
2	8	38% School Behavior 31% Other
3	8	30% Home Behavior 34% School Behavior 19% Other
4	7	35% Home Behavior 29% School Behavior 18% Affective Goals
5	8	42% School Behavior 16% Home Behavior 14% Personal Feelings 12% Other
6	8	24% School Behavior 24% Placement
7	9	31% Home Behavior 29% School Behavior 19% Other
8	7	52% School Behavior 13% Other 11% Personal Feelings
9	5	57% Home Behavior 18% School Behavior 10% Affective Goals 10% Other
10	9	37% Home Behavior 27% School Behavior 12% Other
11	10	46% School Behavior 11% Placement 10% Other 10% Home Behavior
12	9	46% Home Behavior 24% School Behavior
13	10	31% School Behavior 20% Personal Feelings 12% Other 12% Home Behavior

Table 3 (Cont'd)

Nature and Number of Topics Discussed

Conference #	# of Topics Discussed	Nature of Topics*
14	10	47% School Behavior 26% Home Behavior
15	10	47% School Behavior 18% Personal Feelings 13% Other 10% Home Behavior
16	9	54% School Behavior 13% Affective Goals
	$\bar{X}$ = 8.5	

*Only categories that received more than 10% of the speaking citations are specifically listed.

Participation of Individuals. Table 4 shows the mean number of speaking citations per role. It is impressive that parents, as a group, are the most active participants in the conferences. This finding may be interpreted as supporting the effectiveness of a parent advocate, as proposed by Goldstein and Turnbull (1982), or a case manager, as proposed by Gilliam and Coleman (1981). At Wright School it is the responsibility of the liaison teacher counselor to facilitate these conferences--that is, to involve participants. Given this explicit expectation, these findings may also be interpreted as supportive of the hypothesis posed by Yoshida, Fenton, Kaufman and Maxwell (1978) that suggested parental participation may be, at least in part, a function of team members' expectations of the parents' participation. At Wright School both child and parent are expected to participate and indeed they do.

If the assumption is made that level of participation is a reflection of involvement in the process, the low rate of participation of professionals from the children's home schools, mental health agencies and social services is distressing. This finding, however, is not unlike that of Pugach (1982) who reported that regular public school teachers were often not involved in programs for exceptional children. It may be that the role of persons designated as responsible for an intervention is clearer than the role of persons designated as supportive of the intervention. At Wright School the roles of the teacher-counselors are clearly articulated within the program; however the roles and responsibilities of people outside the school who are supporting the intervention may not always be so clearly articulated. Likewise, in public schools it may not always be clear what regular classroom teachers can or should do as part of the child's intervention. This lack of clarity may, at least in part, explain why studies sometimes report the regular classroom teacher's lack of involvement in IEP conferences.

Conference Satisfaction. Table 5 provides the means and standard deviations of responses to items on the Conference Satisfaction Questionnaire. Clearly

Table 4

Mean Number of Speaking Citations

Role of the Individual Speaking	$\bar{X}$ Number of Speaking Citations*
Parent/Guardian	24.5
Day Teacher Counselor	21.4
Liaison Teacher Counselor	18.3
Night Teacher Counselor	13.6
Child	10.8
Public School Teacher	10.7
Consultant	9.7
Other Family Members	9.5
WS Educational Diagnostician	6.
WS Resource Teacher	5.
Mental Health Worker	4.6
Public School Principal	4.3
Public School Psychologist	4.
Guidance Counselor	3.7
Social Service Case Worker	3.3
Public School Sp. Ed. Supervisor	3.
Special Ed. Practica Students	.57

*The $\bar{X}$ for each role was computed by dividing the number of speaking citations by the number of conferences a person in the role was present.

Table 5

Means and Standard Deviations of Responses to

Items on the Conference Satisfaction Questionnaire

Item Number	Item Mean X	SD
1 Contribution to Conf.	3.8	.94
2 Freedom to Disagree	4.1	.97
3 Freedom to Participate in Planning	4.5	.85
4 Responsibility for Carrying out Plans	4.2	.91
5 Felt Needed at Meeting	4.2	.98
6 Concerns Adequately Dealt With	4.3	.96
7 Appropriate Plans Developed	4.3	.94
8 Purpose of Meeting Clear	4.4	.90
9 This is Best Way to Make Plans	4.3	.97

participants rated the conferences very positively. The item, "I feel free to participate" was most highly rated which is somewhat surprising since in many conferences there were individuals whose participation was minimal. The positive ratings may be reflecting participants' opinion that an effort was being made to give everyone an opportunity to participate rather than reflecting personal sense of freedom to participate. The item receiving the second highest rating was "The purpose of this meeting was clear." This, too, is somewhat surprising since these were described as planning conferences yet little time was spent in planning activities. It seems that most participants want an opportunity to share their observations about the child and until this is done, little in the way of planning is possible.

Table 6 presents the mean responses by role to the Conference Satisfaction Questionnaire. It is clear that there are differences among the groups. Students generally report feeling less positive about their contributions to the conferences, their responsibility in carrying out plans and their having their concerns adequately dealt with during the conferences. Likewise, Wright School staff who do not have direct responsibility for teaching the children seem to feel less positively about their contributions to the conferences and their responsibility for carrying out the plans. It is noteworthy that these ratings are consistent with the role responsibilities.

Table 7 presents the means and standard deviations of responses to items on the Liaison/Consultant Conference Satisfaction Questionnaires. Again, the responses were generally positive. It is of particular interest that the item on which there was the greatest variability in responses is the item questioning whether appropriate plans were made. It is the responsibility of the liaison teacher-counselor to follow up and see that plans made are carried out. If plans are not clearly specified, this is the group that is most likely to notice.

Table 8 presents responses on the Children's Conference Satisfaction Questionnaire. Perhaps what is most striking is that half of the children reported

TABLE 6

Mean Responses by Role to the Conference Satisfaction Questionnaire

Item	Parents	Day/Night TC's	Public Schoolteachers	Med.&Sp.Ed. Students	W.S. Personnel	Mental Health
Contribution to conference	4.0	4.2	3.2	1.3	2.9	3.5
Freedom to disagree	4.3	3.9	4.6	3.1	3.9	4.4
Freedom to participate	4.1	4.6	4.0	3.7	4.2	5.0
Responsibility for plans	4.6	4.4	3.5	2.2	3.0	4.6
Felt needed at meeting	4.5	4.4	3.7	2.1	3.4	4.5
Concerns adequately dealt with	4.5	4.2	4.0	2.5	4.1	4.9
Appropriate plans developed	4.3	3.7	4.2	4.6	4.4	4.9
Purpose of meeting clear	4.8	4.3	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.8
Best way to make plans	4.8	3.9	3.9	4.6	4.5	4.9

Table 7

Means and Standard Deviations of Responses to

Items on the Liaison/Consultant Conference Satisfaction Questionnaire

Item	Item Mean	Standard Deviation
1 Please rate how freely and openly you felt the participants contributed to the conference	4.13	.66
2 Did you feel the important issues were clearly identified?	3.57	.67
3 Do you believe that appropriate plans were developed?	3.6	.95
4 Overall how would you rate this conference?	3.81	.64

Table 8

Responses on the Children's Conference

Satisfaction Questionnaire

Item	Frequency of Response		No. Ans.
	Yes	No	
1 People asked me what I thought in conference	10	3	1
2 People listened to what I had to say	12	3	
3 I was glad I attended the conference	13	1	
4 I think I learned something useful about myself during the conference	7	7	

feeling that they did not learn something useful about themselves yet all but one reported feeling glad that they had attended the conference. This latter finding is of particular interest since recent surveys suggest children often are not included in IEP conferences. On the Basis of this very limited sample, it would appear that children want to be included.

Table 9 shows the responses to the questionnaries by those people who spoke 1 standard deviation above or below the mean for that role. It is interesting to note that the liaison teacher-counselors appear less satisfied when they have a higher than average rate of participation in the planning conferences. This seems consistent with their role as a facilitator of communication among members of the group. They may realize that if they dominate the discussion, others can not participate as freely. Although not shown on this table, the few conferences in which the liaison teacher-counselors talked a great deal were the ones about which they reported not feeling that appropriate plans were being made.

Table 9

Responses to the Questionnaires by Those People who Spoke 1 Standard Deviation Above or Below the Mean for that Role

	Question #	Within 1 S.D. of $\bar{X}$	1 S.D. Above $\bar{X}$	1 S.D. Below $\bar{X}$
LTC	1	4.5	3.5	4
	2	3.5	3.5	3
	3	3.2	2	3
	4	3.8	3	3
Psych. Consult.	1	4.1	4.25	3.3
	2	3.9	3.5	2.8
	3	4.4	4.1	4
	4	4.1	4.1	3.5
DTC	1	4.4	5	4
	2	4.0	4	3.5
	3	4.8	5	3
	4	4.3	4	3.5
	5	4.8	5	4
	6	4.8	4	3
	7	3.8	4	3
	8	4.5	5	2
	9	4.0	4	2
NTC	1	4.1	4	
	2	3.7	3.5	
	3	4.4	4.5	
	4	4.4	4.5	
	5	3.9	4.5	
	6	4.3	4	
	7	4.1	4	
	8	4.1	4	
	9	3.7	4.5	
Parent	1	4.3	3.5	3
	2	4.4	4	2
	3	4.7	4.8	2
	4	4.7	4.8	2
	5	4.8	4.8	3
	6	4.3	4.8	2
	7	4.3	5	4
	8	4.8	5	3
	9	4.8	5	3
Mental Health Worker	1	3.7	5	2
	2	4.3	3	5
	3	5	5	5
	4	4.7	5	3
	5	4.3	5	5
	6	5	4	5
	7	4.7	5	5
	8	4.7	4	5
	9	5	5	5

Table 9 (Cont'd)

Reponses to the Questionnaires by Those People

Spoke 1 Standard Deviation Above or Below the Mean for that Role

	Question #	Within 1 S.D. of $\overline{X}$	1 S.D. Above $\overline{X}$	1 S.D. Below $\overline{X}$
Public	1	3	3	
School	2	3.5	4	
Teacher	3	4	3	
	4	3.5	4	
	5	3.5	4	
	6	3.5	4	
	7	4.5	4	
	8	4.5	4	
	9	4.5	4	

Implications

Given the high level of parent and child participation in these conferences, these results seem to support the use of a case manager or a liaison teacher-counselor. Persons in this role are responsible for seeing that people attend and contribute ro the conference and that goals are achieved. This, however, is a complex process. In order for these functions to be accomplished, much planning and organizing must take place both before and during the conferences.

Advance planning that is done prior to each conference may prevent ineffective, awkward, or even unfriendly conferences. Currently, for some conferences liaison teacher-counselors psychologically prepare parents and children for the conference. Such preparation seems beneficial; consequently, we suspect that even more advance preparation will be productive, especially with persons from community schools and mental health agencies. Specifically, we are encouraging liaison teacher-counselors to follow the following procedures:

1. Meet with the Wright School instructional staff a week or two prior to the conference in order to clarify the team's perceptions of the central issues and needed plans as well as anticipate and plan for potential difficulties.
2. Summarize this meeting and send the summary to all other team members (including parents) prior to the meeting so that they can be thinking about the issues and be more prepared to participate. We speculate that the summary of recent progress will have the practical advantage of saving time for the actual planning during the conference. Include all technical data in the report so that participants have time to think about the information and consider questions they may have. Research (Gilliam and Coleman, 1981) has suggested that technical data may be intimidating to persons not familiar with the procedures for obtaining data and certainly parents have reported informally

that they have difficulty remembering all that is said, especially technical information. We believe that such reports are respectful gestures that contribute to a sense of good team work.

3. Talk with team members in the community prior to the conference in order to find out what their concerns are and what they want covered during the conference. Use this feedback to compile an agenda which is also included in the letter sent to participants prior to the meeting.
4. During the pre-conference conversations test ideas that might be discussed during the conference and, when appropriate, suggest work that might be done prior to the meeting. For example at a recent discharge planning conference, the liaison teacher-counselor had set the following agenda items for discussion after talks with parents and Wright School staff:
   a) Johnny will need an after-school program and a summer camp placement.
   b) Johnny needs an evaluation for medication.
   c) Johnny will need additional help with reading.

   It was suggested that the parents and mental health worker investigate local after-school and summer camp resources, that the mental health worker explain procedures for getting the medical exam and be prepared to discuss issues relating to the use of medication and that the teacher look into the possibilities for obtaining a tutor.
5. Specify in a pre-conference letter who by name and role will be present, when and where the meeting will be held and what the agenda items are whenever appropriate or possible. Specify who is responsible for an agenda item. This is another means of helping others anticipate and be prepared for the meeting. We predict that parents and others who have an agenda and perhaps a task to complete

and bring to the planning conference will have a clearer notion of their role in the case and a greater feeling of responsibility for developing plans at the conference.

6. Discuss with the Wright School team and the parents how to involve the child in the conference. At Wright School children participate in most of the conferences; however the manner in which they participate varies. When sensitive issues such as custody or long-term residential treatment are being discussed, the child may not be present during all of the discussion. Likewise, younger children whose vocabulary or attention span is limited may not participate in all of the conference. However, regardless of how the child is to be involved, the plans for the conference are explained ahead of time. When a child is only going to be in part of the conference, he or she is told where and with whom he or she will be during the remaining time.

7. In all contacts encourage team members to feel free to raise additional questions or concerns at the conference and whenever necessary help team members learn more about and skills of other professionals on the team. Many of the most serious problems encountered bu multi-disciplinary teams result from a poor understanding of what can and cannot be reasonably expected of other disciplines.

During the conference the liaison teacher-counselor or case manager also has many responsibilities. It is this person's responsibility to carry out the following tasks:

1. Introduce all participants. At Wright School this is typically done in one of two ways. The liaison teacher-counselor may ask everyone at the conference to introduce himself to the group or he or she may personally introduce the participants by name and by role. This

act of introducing individuals to one another can set an informal, friendly tone to the meeting. When roles are specified, it removes the mystery and possible anxiety about who various individuals are.

2. Summarize the purpose of the meeting at the outset. For example, the liaison teacher-counselor might say "This meeting was called so that we can make plans for Billy's return to Rosewood School. We need to decide what resources he will need in order to make a good adjustment." By stating a clear purpose, the liaison teacher-counselor may increase the potential for a task-oriented discussion.
3. Outline the meeting agenda specifying what can be realistically dealt with in the time available. If more time is needed to deal with the agenda items, he or she will schedule additional time. Respecting time limits appeared to be important in our study. In the few conferences that lasted longer than scheduled, participants had to leave before the conference was ended, or they were observed becoming restless.
4. Facilitate the conference discussion. Because the liaison teacher-counselor is often the person most sensitive to all of the participants' concerns or agenda items, he or she can sometimes help draw participants into the discussion through open-ended questions or reflective-listening skills. When necessary the liaison teacher-counselor may remind the group of identified responsibilities or time lines or, if necessary, refocus the discussion in other ways.
5. Keep records of the meeting in which assigned responsibilities and time lines are recorded. When such records are not kept and circulated to all participants, decisions and actions that were agreed upon are often forgotton.

As our research indicated, over half of our conference time was spent discussing home and school behavior. While certainly very important, this

detracted from the time available for planning; consequently, it seems alternative plans need to be made so that parents have time to discuss their child with the teacher. If this need is met, the time when the larger multidisciplinary team is present can be spent discussing plans and strategies that involve everyone.

Possible strategies for enabling this parent-teacher communication include phone calls, family nights (special school activities planned for the children's families), mini-conferences with just parents and teachers, parent days, and home visits. Such contacts can help build relationships which help the parents feel part of the team.

In closing it seems appropriate to emphasize that plans are worthwhile only when the persons who make them attach significance to them. The strategies discussed in this presentation are seen as potential ways of maximizing a good working relationship among team members. It is hoped that by following such procedures, a level of trust will develop among team members that will enable them to be candid in expressing their hopes, fears and doubts about the case. Only when communication reaches this level are worthwhile plans likely to be made.

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Persons Present:

Time Started: _____ Conference No.: _____

Time Ended: _____ Date: _____

Time Intervals	Home Behavior	School Behavior	Personal Feelings	Evaluation	Affective Goals	Academics	Personal Family	Health	Placement	Individual Responsibility	Special Services	Future Contacts	Future Plans	Rights & Responsibilities	Other
:30															
:00															
:30															
:00															
:30															
:00															
:30															
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:00															
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Definition of Topics

Home Behavior:	Pertaining to the child's behavior at home or to the management of the child's behavior at home.
School Behavior:	Pertaining to the child's behavior at school or to the management of the child's behavior at school (includes behavior at mental health clinic here).
Personal Feelings:	A discussion about how the child or parents feel about an issue.
Evaluation:	Includes formal test results, not just a discussion of general ability. In order to be coded in this category, the discussion must include mention of a specific test.
Affective Goals:	A discussion of affective goals - usually has to do with goals set upon admission or discharge.
Academics:	Having to do with subjects the child is taking, his performance in school, his ability in school.
Personal/Family:	Relationships within the family.
Health:	The child's physical well-being - includes discussion of medication.
Placement:	After leaving Wright School what type of class the child will be placed in, i.e., educational placement.
Individual Responsibility:	Specification of who is responsible for what.
Special Services:	Services needed by the child that are in addition to what is currently being provided, e.g., speech therapy, hearing test, etc.
Future Contacts:	Plans/agreements to meet in the future.
Future Plans:	After leaving Wright School, plans other than class placement. This includes both immediate future plans and long-range plans.
Rights and Responsibilities:	Rights and responsibilities of both parents and school in carrying out and in providing service.
Other:	Anything not specifically related to the child such as discussion of other family problems, children in general, etc. Long pauses are coded here too.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle your role: Parent Day TC Night TC Counselor/Teacher From Home

Mental Health Worker Other (please specify) _____

1. I feel like I contributed valuable information to this conference.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

2. I felt free to disagree with other people during the conference.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

3. I felt free to participate in the development of plans.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

4. I feel that I have a great deal of responsibility in carrying out the intervention plans.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

5. I feel I was needed at this meeting.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

6. I felt that my concerns were adequately dealt with at the meeting.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

7. I feel that the plans developed are appropriate.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

8. I felt like the purpose of the meeting was clear.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

9. I think this group meeting is the best way to make decisions and plans.

1	2	3	4	5
none at all		somewhat		completely

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LTC's & CONSULTANTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please rate how freely and openly you felt the participants contributed to the conference.

1	2	3	4	5
not at all				very freely

2. Did you feel the important issues were clearly identified?

1	2	3	4	5
not at a all				very much so

3. Do you believe that appropriate plans were developed?

1	2	3	4	5

4. Overall, how would you rate this conference?

1	2	3	4	5
not productive				very productive

Please explain:

CHILD QUESTIONNAIRE

1. People asked me what I thought in the conference. yes no

2. People listened to what I had to say. yes no

3. I was glad I attended the conference. yes no

4. I think I learned something useful about myself during the conference.

yes no